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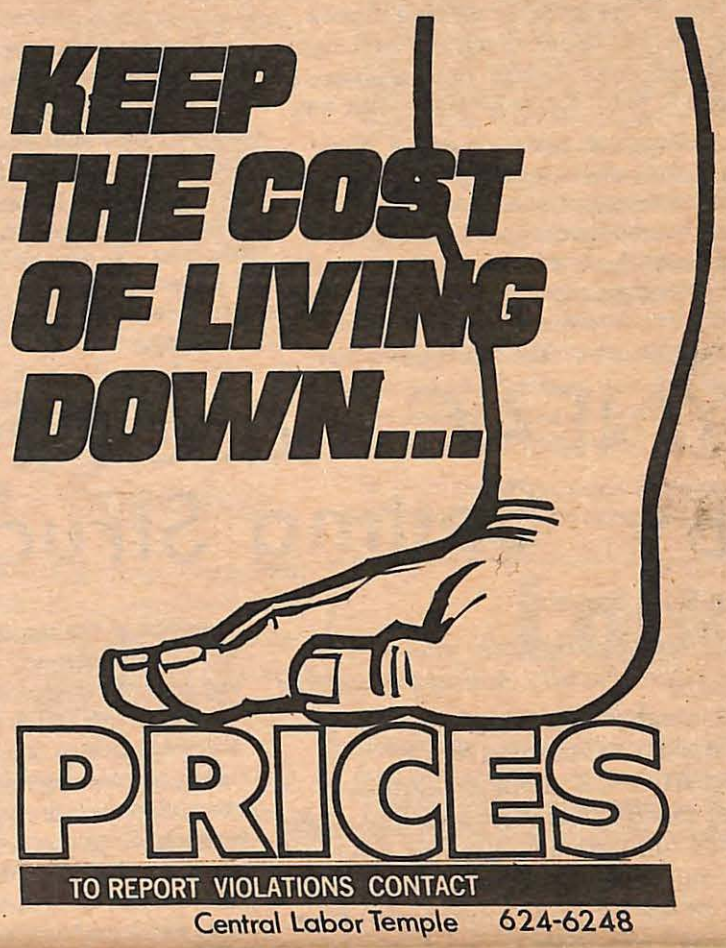
CITY FOOD PRICES SOAR



Special to Modern Times

In a seven week period ending January 20, food prices in the New Haven area jumped at a rate considerably above the annual 3.5 per cent maximum claimed by the head of President Nixon's Price Commission. This information represents the preliminary results of a survey organized by the Connecticut Citizen Action Group (CCAG). It indicates that price controls for foods are not effective.

The continuing survey, whose purpose is to provide New Haven consumers with comparative price information, covers 32 food stores representing eleven chains (A-Mart, A&P, Atlantic, Hills-Korvette, Consumer's COOP, Big Buy, First National, Food Fair, Pegnataro's, Shop Rite, and Stop and Shop) in seven communities (New Haven, West Haven, East Haven, North Haven, Hamden, Milford, and Branford).

A total of over 50 items was counted in the survey. Most are staples and came under Phase II regulation. Others such as fresh meats, fresh fruits and vegetables, and eggs are also included. *The items represent a typical family food basket.*

Both sets of foods, covered by Phase II or not, showed significant price increases, although those not under regulation rose considerably more. Exact figures for three survey dates covering a nine week period will be made public by CCAG within a week.

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Hundreds Gather To Bust Highway Trust

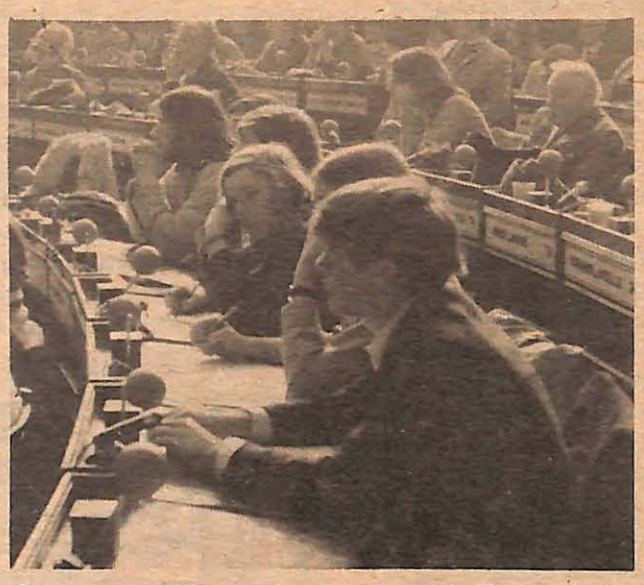
by Tony Dominski
Modern Times Staff

About 500 environmentalists and a coalition of anti-highway groups including New Haven's Anti-Route 34 Coalition went to Hartford before the Legislative Finance Committee Tuesday February 8 to oppose the highway trust fund. It was the largest such lobby in the history of the state, and was organized mainly by the Nader inspired Connecticut Citizens Action Group (CCAG). The lobby was gathered to support the bill introduced by state Rep. Mettler which would abolish the state highway trust fund and put gasoline and road taxes into a general fund.

The strategy behind supporting the bill was that the abolition of the state highway fund would cause a slowdown in new road construction by making highway bonds harder to obtain, enable mass transit projects to be developed and to diminish the influence of the highway lobby which up until now has been spearheaded by the state Department of Transportation (D.O.T.).

Under questioning of Rep. Mettler, the D.O.T. representative admitted that in the last two years the D.O.T. had spent only $5 million on mass transit, and most of that money was poured into the Penn Central railroad. In contrast they spent over $300 million for highways.

Finance Committee members must decide whether to Bust the Trust. (MT photo by H. Lowendorf)



Students....and Non Students lobby in Hartford against more and more highways. (MT photo by H. Lowendorf)

Change in Name Only

Many of the speakers for the Mettler bill said that the D.O.T. was acting as if it were in fact still the old state highway department, having changed its name but not its policies. One lobbiest pointed out that only five of the D.O.T.'s 4000 employees were working on mass transit.

The lobbyists for the Mettler bill were diverse and enthusiastic and filled the Hall of the House. They included high school students, college students, college professors, health and planning professionals, retired people and environmentalists in general. Both formal and informal attire was worn and many people had on cards saying "Bust the Trust." When a speaker scored a strong point against highways, the audience burst into loud applause. Many in the citizens lobby sacrificed and took the day off from work.

The anti-highway coalition had done their homework and presented carefully thought-out arguments against an expansion of our present highway system.

A nurse warned that the incidence of emphysema (a disease of the lungs) was increasing due to air pollution and would continue to increase if we encourage more automobile traffic.

A number of ecology groups in the rural northwest and southwest sections of the state expressed fear of the coming "megalopolis" -- an unending belt of urban and suburban sprawl running from Washington to Boston which could engulf the rural areas, destroying

See ENVIRONMENTALISTS, p. 9

TAXED BY TAXES

See p. 2

Guess Who Finally Pays the Tax?

by Matt Borenstein
Modern Times Staff

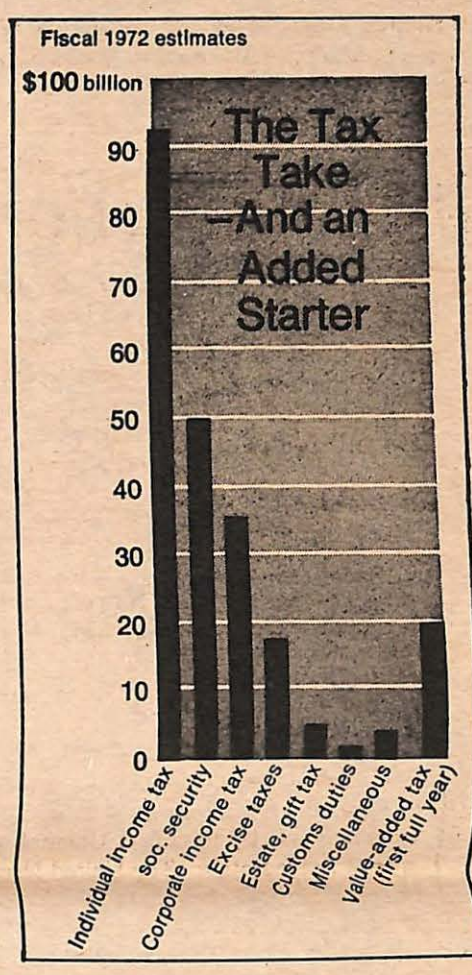
Sales Tax, value added tax, income tax, property tax, social security tax are all on the agenda of the federal and state government – and whatever the decision, guess who pays the tax?

Three recent tax events are worth watching while contemplating the April 15 income tax deadline:

1. The state legislature began session in Hartford on February 9 and Governor Meskill proposed an increase in the sales tax from 6½ to 7%.

2. Courts in California, Texas and Wisconsin have ruled that the property tax cannot be used to finance education.

3. Nixon is considering a national sales tax called a "value added" tax to help fund local education.



All of the three above items relate to the funding of state and city services. Although the federal income tax has not been increased too much over the past ten years (except for Johnson's 10% surcharge) state and local taxes have gone up by about 10% per year. For example, in the last five years the Connecticut sales tax has risen from 3½% to 6½% and the New Haven property tax from about 35 mills to about 75 mills.

7% Sales Tax?

In Connecticut, Governor Meskill has just proposed an increase in the sales tax from 6½% to 7%. His new budget included a paltry increase in aid to local education from $205 to $215 per student and almost no expansion of state services.

With the cost of education and other city services likely to go up, cities in Connecticut like New Haven may try to raise the extra money through an increased property tax. And if you don't own property, your rent will go up.

State Representative George Ritter (D-Hartford) has proposed a means of taxation which tries to deal with the problems of unfair sales and property taxes. The Ritter proposal includes a graduated income tax (3% for *taxable* incomes under $2000 in steps to 16% on *taxable* incomes of $30,000 and over-- capital gains would be taxed at their full value) and reductions in the sales tax and property tax.

Graduated Tax Proposal

Ritter's tax would raise enough money to reduce the sales tax from 6½% to 3½% and reduce local property taxes an average of 25%. The money per public school student would be raised from $200 to $500, and one half the cost of local police and fire protection and the total cost of local welfare would be funded.

This proposal is not likely to be seriously considered this legislative session. As costs of essential services such as education, police, fire, and sanitation went up, State and local governments chose to erode incomes of working people through relatively invisible and inequitable property taxes and sales taxes.

Property Tax Not Equal

The ideal tax, according to an ancient saying, is the one that gets the most feathers out of the goose for the least squawk. The court decisions on school financing have challenged the right of local governments to pluck the goose in the same way.

The court decisions on school financing make it clear that the property tax discriminates against poor communities. A rich community can spend more on its education with a lower property tax rate than a poor community so that the place you live in can determine the quality of education you receive. The courts claim that this is not equal under the law as guaranteed by the *Constitution*.

Value Added is Sales Tax

To try and relieve the burden of local property taxes Nixon has proposed the value-added tax which in reality is a national sales tax. The tax would be imposed on the "value added" to an item as it moved through the production process. The tax would be collected from producers but passed on to consumers. This is a convenient new gimmick to introduce now that the property tax is being called into question.

The value added tax is invisible and open-ended. Presently proposed rates are between 2½% and 5%, but Germany, for example, has a value added tax of 23%. According to an AFL-CIO spokesman: Mr. Nixon is giving all the money to the rich through such schemes as the investment credit plan. So now he has no place to go but the working-person for revenue. No matter how you slice it, a value-added tax is a sales tax."

YNFAC Plans Ahead By Setting Structure

by Ruth Resnick
Union Organizer with the Yale Non-Faculty Action Committee

Though the hecticness of the campaign has passed (Nov. 17 YNFAC lost a union election by a 2½-1 margin) members now have their hands full with a continuing drive. Committees to draft a constitution and devise a system of representation for union members are meeting. In addition an organizational structure within the union is being worked out to enable the union to operate as democratically and efficiently as as possible in this period before official recognition.

Plans for insuring a monthly income from membership donations to meet the union's ongoing expenses during these months are now being considered. And the YNFAC newsletter with articles analyzing recent personnel department meetings, reporting on the latest union news, both local and national, and an evaluation of the wage-price freeze has just come out.

The Yale administration, in an attempt to appear as the magnanimous employer has issued a memo to department heads and supervisors describing wage increases to be effective March 1. Back in July Yale neglected to take into consideration when determining wage increases, the amount of time an employee had been working. To amend this error Yale claims it is trying to recognize these years of service in these "one time only" *raises which will be based on one's time* at Yale. Those salaries will be increased which are now at the minimum wage level of the job category by $125 per year for every year of Yale employment, not to exceed $500. The nominal impact of these increases and the number of employees who will actually be eligible for them (there are some qualifying conditions) is indeed insulting to just those employees Yale claims it is trying to do justice by. This memo was made available to YNFAC (needless to say not by Yale) and YNFAC in turn is making it available to Yale employees.

This memo seems to be just another ploy on the part of Yale to avoid the inevitable issue of employees having an effective bargaining voice in their jobs.

Testimony Hits Welfare Cuts

by Beverly Gouaux
Modern Times Staff

During the past few weeks, there have been ongoing legislative hearings held in Hartford about the welfare system. A number of organizations have been represented. Among them have been included the Women's Political Caucus, League of Women Voters, Legal Aid Association, Welfare MOMS, and various groups of professional people. The major concern of all these groups was the possibility of major cuts being made in the money allotted to welfare clients.

One of the clearest positions presented at the hearings was that of Dr. Morris Wessel of New Haven. Dr. Wessel stated that the cuts already in effect are close to "class and racial genocide." Dr. Wessel pointed out that there is already a dangerously low provision for food in the the present welfare budget. Further reductions will cause children to starve.

Wessel referred to the dozing children in public schools who have inadequate breakfasts and suppers and cannot learn and function in school with other children. Not only do these children not learn, but they also become susceptible to many colds, anemia, sore throats. and other illnesses that deprive them of more school.

Dr. Wessel showed that the hunger and malnutrition of the child is carried on through succeeding generations. Malnourished mothers have weaker, more sickly children, who begin life with disease and frailty and are never able to catch up with the rest of society. It was this fact that led Dr. Wessel to make his statement about "class and racial genocide"'

Wessel concluded his statement by pointing out that cuts will defeat even the present hysteria of the Meskill administration because medical care of the chronically malnourished child is infinitely more expensive than giving him enough to eat. Such children never have any real chance in society when they have been ill, hungry, and underschooled all their lives.

Most of the others who testified at the hearings were members of the white middle class arguing against this cultural murder being committed by the white middle class. There simply is no way for a welfare family to survive with the cuts. If important additions to clothing, rent, or a crucial bill are necessary, food will have to be sacrificed. The most basic and nutritious foods are the most expensive: orange juice,lettuce, meat, and milk products. Consequently, many welfare families have to subsist largely on cheap white bread, canned tomatoes, and hot dogs.

As Dr. Wessel said: "Welfare families at the present moment are just barely able to buy food to keep them going. To decrease allotments would provide insufficient funds to keep them going. To decrease allotments would provide insufficient funds to maintain maintain adequate health standards. In short, children will be starved. There is no other way of saying it."

"Of course, Great Britain is part of the free world! Why do you ask?"

Union Wins 8% In G&O Contract

by David Adams
Modern Times Staff

Negotiations went down to the wire between United Auto Workers Local 979 and the G & O Manufacturing Co. in New Haven before they came to a contract agreement The agreement aveerted a possible strike on February 1.

The contract agreement was presented to a well-attended membership meeting of the union on Feb. 2. After a voice vote on the contract, the meeting was immediately adjourned.

The union gained many of the concessions that, as Local 979 President Stanley Rogers had earlier indicated to Modern Times, the union wanted from the company.

Wage and fringe benefit increases come to a total of 8%, according to Rogers, and part of it will have to be approved by the National Wage Board because it exceeds their guidelines.

The new contract will run only one year instead of the three years of the previous contract. According to Rogers, the contract gives the union more flexibility in dealing with inflation and the possibility that the wage freeze might be lifted.

The union made gains in the pension plan, health coverage, and vacations. Under the old contract, the pension was $3.50 per month for every year of service. It's now been increased to $4.50. The new health plan will be the CMS CEntury Plan with an option for the Community Health Plan if the employeee wants it. An extra week of vacation was negotiated. Employees with 25 years of service now get five weeks vacation instead of four. Twenty-year employees get four weeks instead of three and so down the line.

The extra holiday that the union wanted was denied by the company, but instead employees will be allowed a paid day off on their birthday.

No attempt was made at this time to get major changes in contract language.

GM Speedup

Workers at the super-automated GM Vega plant in Lordstown, Ohio have voted almost unanimously to strike if no other way can be found to halt GM's speed-up and layoff drive.

When the assembly line in the Vega plant is moving at top speed--100 cars an hour--each worker has 36 seconds to complete his part of the operation. At this speed, which has not been reached too frequently on the fastest assembly line in the world, the workers say they can't keep it up.

Management is trying to increase efficiency and reduce costs by cutting back on hundreds of jobs and by spreading the work out among the remaining workers. The Vega is GM's answer to foreign imports.

The dispute began last October, shortly after the General Motors Assembly Division, a management team known for its toughness, took over and began to cut jobs and shuffle work around.

The almost 8,000 workers in the Vega plant, members of United Auto Workers' Local 1112 have been engaging in slowdowns over the past two months because of the intolerable pressure of the work. They have finally decided to strike if nothing is done about the conditions in the plant.

United Nuclear gate on Gibbs Street off Shelton Avenue. This gate was the site of informational picketing by security guards who were laid off when they asked for a union. (M-T photo by Matt Borenstein.)

At United Nuclear

Guards Await NLRB Action

by Henry Tamarin
Modern Times Staff

The 16 Security Guards at the United Nuclear Corporation were out on the streets picketing this week after being fired January 31.

It began last October when the guards met to discuss working conditions at the plant. They then petitioned the National Labor Relations Board for an election to have the United Plant Guard Workers of America, Local 539, represent them in collective bargaining with the company.

It was shortly after this that the men were given notice that they were being fired. They must now wait at least several months for the NLRB to act on their petition and schedule an election.

The NLRB must also act on the unfair labor practices filed by the Union against United Nuclear. One involves the "blue slip" given to the men. Unless the reason for dismissal is disciplinary action, the worker is entitled to collect Unemployment Compensation. The United Nuclear Corporation gave the reason for dismissal as "strike action" although the men didn't start their informational picketing until after they had been dismissed.

In a strike situation no blue slip is given at all. The men are now effectively prevented from collecting unemployment compensation until the NLRB acts on their unfair labor practice charge. This will take several months.

The majority of the dismissed workers are veterans. All have received security clearances which take up to seven weeks to process. Once that is done they are still subject to periodic inspection by the Atomic Energy Commission. Most of the guards had been employed at United Nuclear between one and five years. They are being replaced by men from the Wackenhut Corp., from Florida.

Labor Notes

BLAST PAYBOARD

The following is an excerpt from the statement of the labor members of the Pay Board after the rejection of the 12% aerospace contracts last month: "We cannot believe that inflation can be curbed successfully by taking money out of the pockets of 200,000 aerospace workers and their families – especially when they already have contributed so much to the anti-inflation struggle."

"In 1968 the aerospace workers demonstrated their responsibility by accepting a cap on their cost-of-living escalators. This act has cost aerospace workers more than $1,000 apiece which they can never recover."

PRATT AND WHITNEY CONTRACT APPROVED

The contract of 16,000 Pratt and Whitney workers in Connecticut has finally been approved by the Pay Board. The contract calls for an 8% first year wage increase. Although the contract has not been signed yet, union officials (International Association of Machinists – District 91) expect it to be official by March 1.

SCHOOL CUSTODIANS IN STALEMATE WITH CITY

The school custodians have been working without a contract since June 30, 1971. They have been negotiating since February, 1971. In one full year, no agreement has been reached between Local 287 and the Board of Education. The custodians are asking for wages and benefits comparable to other city employees. As a result of the Board's unwillingness to negotiate in good faith, the union has filed three unfair labor practice suits at great expense.

CITY EMPLOYEES ACCEPT TWO YEAR CONTRACT

Members of Local 884 of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees voted on February 9 to accept a new two year contract with the city. Local 884 represents city clerical workers. The new contract, retroactive to last July 1 when the old contract expired, provides for a 5.5% first year wage increase. The salary range in the old contract was $4,130 – $12,160. The new pension provides for retirement at age 60 after 30 years service for full payment. The old contract gave full pensions at age 65 after 35 years service.

Atlantic Wire Workers Win Strike

by David Adams
Modern Times Staff

"For years the company has coasted and thrown us bones without any meat. This time we stood up and showed what we're made of, that we weren't happy with what we were getting. We stayed out for five weeks but it was worth it. The settlement was excellent."

The preceding statement by a worker at Atlantic Wire in Branford, who is a member of Local 1376 of the International Association of Machinists, sums up the general feeling of victory after the end of their strike which began New Year's Day.

While the rest of their union manned the picket lines through freezing weather, a five man negotiating committee worked out a new two year contract with the company. They were aided by Warren Hoffman, international representative of the parent union, the Grand Lodge of the International Association of Machinists.

The new contract was ratified by the membership at a meeting February 5, and signed by the union and company on February 9. Unlike many similar strike situations, all workers are back on the job without time lost.

14% over 2 Years

The union will gain a 14% increase in wages and fringes over the two year life of the new contract, with 6½% the first year. That means, figured on a flat hourly rate, that the lowest paid workers (grade II) will go from $2.52 now to $2.69 after one year to $2.85 after two years. The highest paid workers (grade 3) will rise from $3.75 now to $3.99 in one year to $4.24 in two years.

Most wages at Atlantic are actually higher, since most of the men work on an incentive wage plan which pays 130% of the hourly flat rate. At least two contract changes concern the incentive plan. One provides for a review of policies in the departments where workers are not getting 130% incentive boost. Another guarantees 130% incentive pay to men who are training new operators.

Job Safety Issues

Job safety was also a major issue. The new contract provides for a safety committee with meetings on company time, plus an increase in safety equipment.

The new pension benefits have increased from $3.10 per month for every year of service up to $3.60 per month the first year and $4.10 per month in the second year of the contract. Medical benefits have been increased from the old Community Plan to the new Century Plan. Union members also have the option to join the Community Health Plan, with the company paying the same amount as it would pay to the Century Plan.

Members of the union negotiating committee included Kenneth Fleck (Chief Steward), Morty Miller, John Donofrio, Robert Crawley, and Cornelius Sansone.

MCHR to Discuss Job Safety

by Dan Vapnek
Modern Times Staff

Occupational Safety and Health will be the subject of a session of the Medical Committee on Human Rights (MCHR) regional conference to be held on Feb. 19.

One purpose of the session is to recruit and train workers and students in their rights under the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970.

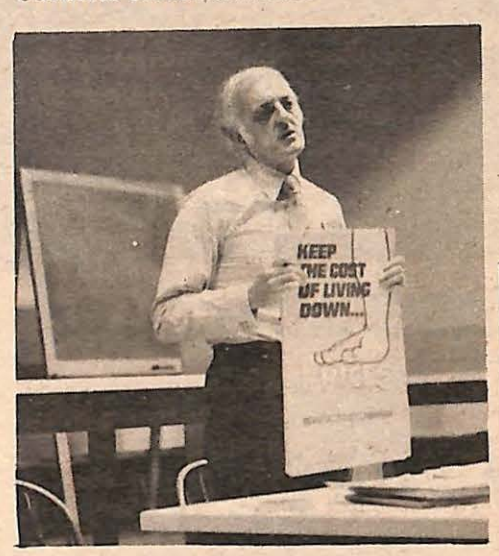
The session, which will be chaired by Vincent Sirabella (President, Greater New Haven Central Labor Council), is sponsored by the Occupational Health Project the New Haven chapter of MCHR and the Connecticut Citizens Action Group. It will be held from 1-5 PM at the Harkness Auditorium of the Yale Medical School.

For information on the Central Labor Councils' Job Safety Conference on Feb. 26, see page 11.

Committee to Hold Price Line

Modern Times Staff

The New Haven Labor Council's Price Monitoring Committee has announced its willingness to serve as an information bureau on prices and as a clearing house for consumer complaints against price gouging by business establishments.



Vincent Sirabella, President of the New Haven Central Labor Council, displays a new poster to inform the public that the Price Watchdog Committee is now open for business. (M-T photo by Ray Milici.)

If you notice that the price of anything you buy has gone up, call the Labor Council's office at 45 Water Street, New Haven, tel: 624-6248.

The Committee, also known as a "price watchdog", was formed following a community wide meeting on December 11 sponsored by the Central Labor Council. It is composed of representatives of 18 labor and community organizations.

At the last meeting of the Committee it was revealed that the AFL-CIO has concluded a nationwide agreement with Legal Aid which will provide legal assistance to consumers who have filed complaints of price violations with the Price Committees set up around the country.

The Committee members are: Vincent Sirabella, President, Greater New Haven Central Labor Council; Nina Adams, Yale Non-Faculty Action Committee; Walter Adams, Conn. Council of Senior Citizens; Frank Annunziato, New Haven Federation of Teachers Local 933; Dan Bartolini, Insurance Workers Union Local 90; Jay Bovilsky, Human Relations Council; Diana Hublebank, Ladies Garment Workers Union Local, 151; Marvin Hunter, Urban League; Justin F. Manning, Office Employees Union Local 329; Ann McKoy, Fair Haven Parents Ministry; Katherine Meech, League of Women Voters; Ronald O'Brien, New Haven Federation of Teachers, Local 933; Sam Orfino, Federation of University Employees Local 35; Katherine Quinn, Fair Haven Neighborhood Corporation; Frank Rak, Printing Pressmen Local 74; Dave Redmond, Typographical Union Local 47; John Wilhelm, Hotel and Restaurant Employees Local 217; and Lynn Zawacki, Young Unionists Action League.

Fight For Consumer Protection

by Bev Gouaux
Modern Times Staff

Did your coffee pot spring a leak the week after you bought it? Did that car dealer sell you a '64 Chevy with cracked bearings? Did the hamburger turn out to be moldy?

There's not a lot you can do about tricky used-car salesmen, but there *are* people you can call if you have a complaint about other purchases. They are the volunteers of the Connecticut Consumer Association, located in New Haven in the First Methodist Church on the corner of Elm and College, (phone) 562-2694.

The Consumer Association, headed by Helen Pope, does battle with big business on behalf of the consumer – carrying on a two-pronged struggle. When you call with a complaint – over faulty goods, a deceptively-advertised correspondence course, a sneaky loan agency – a volunteer will take your grievance to the source of the trouble and try to clear it up.

The other side of the battle takes place in the state legislature. There the group, consisting of a dozen informed and dedicated women, lobbies on behalf of the consumer. In their first actions last year they halted several bills which favored the big companies over the consumer.

They are widening their efforts this year. Supported by New Haven Legal Aid they are lobbying for measures to increase the power of the consumer through more protective legislation.

They are a small voice now – compared *to the paid lobbyists of the companies.* But backed by "consumer consciousness" that "we don't have to put up with this shoddy merchandise," the Connecticut Consumer Association could be more effective.

Playgroup in Westville

Mothers in the Westville area have organized a cooperative DAY CARE CENTER. A group of mothers realizing the need for such facilities have obtained the use of the dayroom at St. James Episcopal Church. They meet Monday and Wednesday mornings and share supervisory duties. (M-T photo by Paul Gill.)

Agency Defends Tenant Claims

by Karen Wolff
Modern Times Staff

Tenants can now be protected against their landlord's unfair rental practices with the help of the Fair Rent Commission. The New Haven office at 770 Chapel St. was established in July, 1971. Directors J. DeRienzo and Bob Johnson say it has been very successful in helping those tenants who have come to them for assistance.

The process for the complaints is simple. When a complaint is filed, the Commission's inspectors go to the home. The Commission then sends a letter to the landlord informing him of the complaint. Negotiations begin, and if the problems are resolved within 30 days no hearing is necessary.

If the landlord refuses to cooperate, he can be fined $100 for each offense of thirty days in jail. Each day that he puts off can be counted as an offense.

Tenants Protected by Law

Throughout the process tenants are protected by Section 11 of the amended Fair Rent Ordinance. NO RETALIATORY EVICTIONS can be used against tenants who file complaints.

The Fair Rent Commission was established to deal with tenant complaints. It cannot go out and search for them. Only after the complaints are filed can they send their inspectors out. They have been very successful so far but hope more people will use their services.

For information contact the Fair Rent Commission, 770 Chapel St., 777-5791. When sending in a complaint don't forget to mark down the times that you will be home so the inspectors can reach you.

Foundation Funds Teacher Center

by Craig O'Connell
reprinted from Advance, NHFT

The Teacher Center, an autonomous collective of several teachers and parents from around New Haven, has been funded with over $14,000. The funding, which came last month from the Hazen Foundation, will guarantee the learning center a year of full-time operation.

Since September the center had existed without funds, operating only on a part-time basis. Although the idea of a teacher center is not a new one (they exist quite matter-of-factly in England), the group in New Haven is one of the few now in operation in this country.

The idea, however, is contagious and has recently received the full support of NHFT President Ronald O'Brien and United Federation of Teachers President Albert Shanker.

Workshop for Teachers

Since its inception the New Haven based organization has held several workshops for classroom teachers concerned about the nuts and bolts of learning. Every Tuesday night there have been pot luck suppers offering good conversation and friendly people.

Recently the Center sponsored a film festival on the British primary schools which was attended by over 200 people. Now that it has funds the organization will attempt to broaden its goals and hopefully reach out to even more teachers.

In the works right now are plans for a series of workshops on arts and crafts, including tie-dyeing, macrame, weaving, etc., a conference on open education and another on women and sexism in the schools. In a few weeks the organization will be open on a daily basis, serving as a drop-in center to anyone interested in education.

Quality Material

Teachers will be able to drop in at any time after school or in the evenings and just sit around and rap or get involved in a wealth of neat classroom materials which are bound to turn you on. Aside from the materials there are a lot of useful books and literature on science and math and up-to-date catalogs of educational materials.

People interested in finding out more about the Teacher Center should call 624-9521 and put their name on the mailing list, or better still drop by some Tuesday night for a 5:30 pot luck supper. The Teacher Center is located on 75 Admiral Street, just off Dixwell Avenue in New Haven.

At the Tuesday night communal dinner at the Teachers Center, people meet and discuss things of interest to teachers in the New Haven area. L. to R. Linda Mandeville, Mary Nicholas, an unidentified teacher, Bob Forsberg, Barney Brawer, an unidentified teacher, and Marge Joseph. (M-T photo by Paul Gill.)

Fair Haven Housing Program Opens

by Katrina Clark
Modern Times Staff

An innovative project has been started in Fairhaven that will enable residents to buy and rehabilitate homes, according to their wishes, needs, and financial capabilities.

Fair Haven Housing, Incorporated, is a recently organized non-profit housing development corporation that is based on a realistic and exciting approach to neighborhood renewal. It was developed by the Fair Haven Neighborhood Corporation with the purpose of "protecting and enhancing the residential character of a specific area of Fair Haven threatened by social and physical deterioration." It also creates "home ownership opportunities for a number of families, through the acquisition of vacant and absentee-owned properties and their rehabilitation for owner occupancy."

Sam Miller, the Executive Director of the Fair Haven Housing, Inc. and Assistant Director of the Fair Haven Neighborhood Corporation explained the new program and described the block that had been selected. After many months of studies and consultation with the New Haven Redevelopment Agency, the Fair Haven Housing, Inc. selected Haven Street between Grand Avenue and Clay Street as its initial target. Haven Street was chosen because the houses, although pretty dilapidated, "can be renovated as a unique resource for lower-income home ownership."

One significant goal of the Corporation is to take this one block, and "save it as a neighborhood and as a decent place to live." Rather than tearing down and changing the composition of the neighborhood -- this program can enable residents to buy the homes and rehabilitate them.

Mr. Miller also stressed that this program is unique in its desire that residents who become the homeowners are the ones to decide the renovations that should should be made and are the people who are involved in the planning and design of their own homes.

The Fair Haven Housing, Inc. has been successful in obtaining the backing of the New Haven Foundation, and is working closely with city banks to finance the purchase of the houses. The emphasis of the program is on providing the financial, legal and educational support and backing for lower income residents who wnat to become homeowners. The Fair Haven Housing Inc. has the funds and resources that can facilitate home ownership as well as effect relatively inexpensive rehabilitation.

Both in keeping with the market value of the properties in the Haven Street area, as well as staying within the price range of lower income Fair Haven residents, the Corporation does not anticipate that the entire costs of development for a single family will exceed $17,000 or $18,000.

The Fair Haven Housing, Inc. is presently negotiating for the acquisition of seven vacant properties on Haven Street, by utilizing programs of the Federal Housing Authority (FHA) and the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) which provide mortgage insurance and interest subsidy payments. One resident has already begun construction and rehabilitiation on his new home which was bought this summer with the assistance of financial backers and the corporation.

Miller stated that the Corporation hopes that any resident who becomes a homeowner will be paying less for the mortgage, taxes and insurance on his/her own home, than he/she is now paying in rent to someone else.

House purchased by Paul Spicer, 87 Haven St., is the first on that Fair Haven street to be rehabilitated. (M-T photo by Theresa Hammie).

NO END IN VIEW AT FAIRVIEW

by Andy Melville
Modern Times Staff

No end is in sight for Fairview Convalescent Home employees. Their case against the convalescent home for serious labor law violations has been going on since January 24 at the Hall of Records, and it will probably take another month to finish testimony.

The hearings are only the latest development in a long dispute. Early last spring, over 90% of the convalescent home *employees signed up with Local 1199, Drug and Hospital Workers Union. Management refused to agree to hold an election. Instead, they threatened union supporters and tried to bribe kev employees.*

One woman, Louise Tierney, reported a bribe she'd been offered by the management and was fired. The other employees struck in support. The strike lasted from late May to early September, but finally was broken by management scabs from Massachusetts, plus the refusal of Connecticut state officials to discontinue state agency payments to the convalescent home.

The union argued that the Home didn't meet the State legal requirements because it was being run by a skeleton crew of untrained scabs. The Meskill administration continued payments anyway.

Bribery and Threats

The Convalescent Home fired ten of the strikers, so starting in September, the union had to organize new employees. To combat this, management tried the same tactics--interrogation, bribery and threats. At this point, the Union called in the National Labor Relations Board, which investigated and found that the Union charges were true.

The NLRB general counsel has charged the Home with violations of the National Labor Relations Act. Another division of the NLRB, the trial examiner division, is now hearing the general counsel's charges and witnesses on the one hand, and management's defense on the other hand. That is what the present hearings are all about.

"Even when you win, you lose," explains Jerry Brown, Local 1199 organizer. "The Home will eventually lose the case. But they will drag out the proceedings as long as they can, hoping to starve us out, hoping that the pro-union employees will take jobs elsewhere. At Heritage House on Chapel Street, they dragged the case through the courts for a year before we could make them bargain with us. We hope that we can hold out long enough here, too."

MCHR Sets Up Nat'l Health Forum

by Dan Vapnek
Modern Times Staff

The New Haven chapter of the Medical Committee for Human Rights (MCHR) is currently sponsoring a series of weekly discussion on various proposals for a National Health Program.

The major programs being discussed are the Nixon Plan; Medicredit - The AMA plan; the Health Security Act or so-called Kennedy bill, supported by the AFL-CIO, Teamsters and UAW; proposals by the private health insurance industry; and the MCHR plan.

The first of the three weekly discussions, entitled "National Health - Why the Fuss", was led by Dr. George Silver, Prof. of Public Health at Yale University. The reason for the fuss was clear by the end of the discussion. Dr. Silver pointed out that the crisis in health care, which has existed for years, has generally had its greatest effect on poor people (see accompanying table).

Medical Care Costly and Poor

However, because of the tremendous inflation in the costs of medical care in recent years, the crisis has now spread to middle class Americans. Medical costs rose from 13 billion in 1950 to $27 billion in 1960 to $70 billion in 1970. In trying to cope with the increasing costs, people have found that private health insurance is inadequate, paying for only one third of the average person's health bill, while Medicare pays only 45% of the medical costs for persons over 65.

What makes the problem even worse, is that although Americans pay a greater percentage of their GNP than any country for medical service, the care they get is often of poor quality or non-existent. For example, the U.S. ranks 18th in male life expectancy, 11th in female life expectancy and 13th in infant mortality.

Silver stated that National Health Insurance must be linked to a guarantee of *equal* access to medical care for *all* people He pointed out that it didn't help people if you gave them money to buy medical care if there was no medical care to buy. A good example of this was Medicare. A new demand for medical care was created without creating any new resources. The result was simply inflation of medical costs for everyone. Silver feels that the most important aspects of any new health proposal must be (1) the establishment of new resources and (2) guaranteed equal access to health care services for all.

The second discussion concerned the Nixon Plan. This is actually a hodge podge of plans financed by social security, employer contributions, and administered by the private health insurance industry. The insurance coverage has many deductibles, limited ambulatory and institutional care, and protection in case of catastrophe but with a large deductible. The plan encourages the development of comprehensive prepaid group practices called Health Maintenance Organizations (HMOS).

During the discussion, the plan was attacked for relying on the private health insurance industry (which kept $3 billion of the $17 billion collected from health insurance premeiums in 1969), for not providing sufficient resources to meet the need for services which would arise, and for putting so much emphasis on HMOS while. Congress has not authorized any money for their creation. The plan was also criticized for not having a sufficient amount of consumer control, and for the large deductibles which would discourage people from seeking preventive care.

AMA Plan

The third discussion concerned the AMA plan, Medicredit. While being presented as a health plan, Medicredit is actually an insurance plan. Under this plan, a person gets income tax credits to offset the costs of their health insurance. If a person pays no income tax, the government would pay his or her total health insurance premium (think of all the millionaires who paid no income tax!) The plan has limited hospital and physician benefits and large deductibles.

The plan was severely criticized during the discussion for making statements such as "every person would have equal access regardless of their ability to pay", when the plan in fact does not provide any new resources or redistribution of existing resources. It was pointed out that for persons who live in a rural area or ghetto area where there are no doctors, it didn't make any difference whether they could afford to pay or not. What the plan says to many Americans is that they can have a free trip to the moon if they can figure out how to get there. Other criticisms were that as with HMOS the deductibles would discourage poor people from seeking preventive care, that a person with an income of $6100 had the same deductibles as a person with an income of $1,000,000 and that by providing money for health care with no new services, the only effect of the plan would be to increase the cost of medical care. By the end of the discussion the AMA representative seemed happy to go.

The last three discussions will be the subject of a future article.

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MODERN TIMES is a non-profit volunteer labor publication of the American Independent Movement

MODERN TIMES is a paper to tell the story of and by the people of New Haven. We don't get that kind of news in commercial papers run for profit. There is no place else where the work and play of people who aren't rich is considered important enough to write about. There is no place else in New Haven where the problems of working women and men are told by them instead of by their bosses. There is no place else where the hunger, bad housing and education, lack of health care and police harassment that people live with is told by them.

We live in the richest country in the world. But only a few people get to use most of this wealth for themselves. We must all work together to claim the wealth we all helped to create. Then there would be no need to strike for a few more crumbs, waste our resources and labor on rockets and bombs, or waste the lives of our young men in wars like Vietnam. We would produce what we need—not what is profitable.

The American Independent Movement (AIM) has been working since 1966 to get people together against the rich, powerful few who run New Haven and the whole country. We want everyone to have good housing, good education, child care centers, recreation areas, decent helath care and decent jobs.

STAFF: David Adams, George Andrews, Harry Andrews, Jan Baecker, Virginia Blaisdell, Matt Borenstein, Peggy Buttenheim, Matt Carrano, Katrina Clark, Ellen Comisso, Victtorio Comisso, Joan Dimow, Lillian Dimow, Joelle Dominski, Dan Fendel, Art Fleischner, Gene Frankel, Linda Garson, Paul Gill, Sam Goodwin, Beverly Gouaux, Liz Henderson, Harry Henderson, Bill Hersey, Shoshana Hersey, Eileen Hoffman, Andy Irving, Peter Jackson, Alan Kay, Lois Lounsbery, Pat Lowendorf, Henry Lowendorf, Art Mazer, Scott McIntosh, Alan McKnight, John McLaughlin, Pattee Miller, John Moldenhauer, Kathy Moldenhauer, Betty Murray, Stephanie Ney, Steve Ney, Laurie Nussdorfer, Barbara O'Connell, Craig O'Connell, Paul Penders, P. O'Connell, April Reiss, Naomi Resnick, Ruth Resnick, Florie Ricciuti, Janet Saxon, June Taylor, Dan Vapnek, Dick Weiland, Harriet Wolff, Rick Wolff, Karen Wolff, Edie Zipser.

Editorial

Real Tax Reform

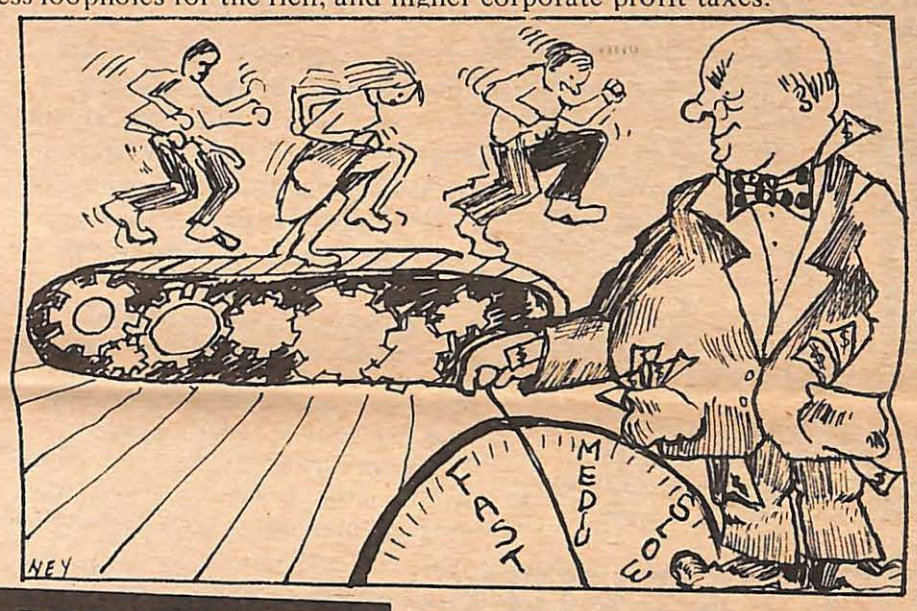
For real tax reform, in the long run, working people will have to confront America's giant corporations. Taxes for the individual are going up, services are going down. According to MIT economist, Lester Thurow, the effective tax rate for corporations has fallen from 42% in 1950 to 24% in 1971. This has been accomplished by allowing more generous depreciation allowances and investment tax credits for large corporations.

Corporate taxes presently provide about $36 billion in federal revenue. If corporations paid their taxes according to the basic rate of 48% and the loopholes were eliminated we could reduce personal income taxes by over 25%. If we raised corporate taxes it would reduce personal taxes even more.

However, raising corporate taxes without rigid price controls would be ineffective. American corporations have always passed tax increases as well as wage increases back to the worker in the form of higher prices.

Real tax reform, finally, must begin by understanding that corporate income (profits) has been produced by the workers and really belongs to them. A 100% corporation profit tax would mean that the product of American labor would be used for the benefit of the American worker.

In the meantime, American workers must fight for other tax reforms: elimination of the sales tax and property tax, higher income taxes and less loopholes for the rich, and higher corporate profit taxes.



Write On

Support Ireland

To the Editors:

The wanton slaughter on Bloody Sunday of thirteen civilians in Northern Ireland by British troops should waken the conscience of the people of our state, as well as of our country, and bring them to demand action by our government.

The most vigorous and appropriate action would be to support the resolution introduced in the Senate by Abe Ribicoff and Ted Kennedy, and in the House by a large group of sponsors including Ella Grasso.

This calls on our government to urge the British Government to take positive steps to end the slaughter and the suffering inflicted on both Catholics and Protestants in this situation, a hangover from Britain's colonial days.

It is incredible that in the Derry massacre, the British army should claim that it was reacting to snipers who had submachine guns and M-1 carbines; but no British soldier was hit. As I recall what happened in our country after the Boston massacre, that group of "embattled farmers" who resisted the British army did a pretty good job from behind stone walls and fences, and they didn't have submachine guns.

The facts of the matter seem plain: the British army is now an occupying force, which arrests without warrants and holds without trial any suspected IRA member, while it makes no attempt to disarm the thousands of Unionist Partisans who constitute the oppressive force which deprives the Catholic minority of the most basic rights to jobs, to housing, and to proportionate representation in local or provincial government.

I am proud to say that the National AFL-CIO, at its November convention, passed a resolution even stronger than the Ribicoff-Kennedy-Grasso proposal. It would have our government call on our supposedly closest ally (which has never hesitated to advise us to get out of Vietnam, for example) to get the British army out of the province of Ulster, end the practice of arrest and detention without trial, and call a conference of all the parties involved (including the IRA as well as the Paisleyites) to work out a peaceful political solution which could lead to a truly representative government, and hopefully to the eventual reunification of this troubled little country.

What surprises me is that so few Americans, who are concerned about every other instance of government by force and terror, from Greece to Cuba, from Pakistan to Rhodesia, should be willing to speak out against this instance of the same kind of brutal repression by what we were taught in school was our "mother country."

Sincerely,
John J. Driscoll
President, Connecticut State Labor Council, AFL-CIO

It Began In Ohio

To the editor:

I am sure that it was an oversight on the part of **Modern Times** not to acknowledge the fact that the article, "What Kids Can Learn About Strikes," which appeared on page 7 of the February 1 issue was actually a reprint from the January, 1972, **American Teacher**, the national publication of the American Federation of Teachers.

Your readers may have been puzzled as to which town Ms. Crann teaches in; perhaps it is Ansonia, where teachers were on strike three days last December. No, the story you reprinted comes from Youngstown, Ohio! The fact that the incident took place so far away did not make it one bit less interesting to your readers, and I hope that in the future **Modern Times** will continue to broaden its coverage. After all, the media shortchanges the labor movement and other oppressed layers of this society just as badly on the national level as on the local level.

Fraternally,
Tim Craine
member, AFT Local 933

We apologize for our error and thank the writer of this letter for calling it to our attention. — *the Editors*

Introduction to Socialism

Capitalists Must Keep Pace With Merry-go-Round

The ABC of Socialism
by Leo Huberman

What is socialism? What do socialists really believe? What's it got to do with America, with New Haven, with the here and now? In answer to questions like these from our readers, **Modern Times** *decided to publish a series of articles from Leo Huberman's famous pamphlet,* ***The ABC of Socialism****. The following is the fourth in the series.*

The capitalist begins with money. He buys the means of production and labor power. The workers, using their labor power on the means of production, produce commodities. The capitalist takes these commodities and sells them for money. The amount of money he gets at the end of the process must be greater than the amount of money he started with. The difference is his profit.

If the amount of money at the end of the process is not greater than the amount of money he started with, then there is no profit and he stops producing. Capitalist production does not begin or end with people's needs. It begins and ends with money.

Money cannot become more money by standing still, by being hoarded. It can only grow by being used as capital, that is by buying the means of production and labor power and thus getting a share of the new wealth created by workers every hour of every day of every year.

It's a real merry-go-round. The capitalist seeks more and more profits so he can accumulate more capital (means of production and labor power), so he can make more and more profits, so he can accumulate more capital, so he can etc., etc., etc.

Now the way to increase profits is to get the workers to turn out more and more goods faster and faster at less and less cost.

Good idea, but how to do it? Machines and scientific management, that was (and is) the answer. Greater division of labor. Mass production. Speed-up. Greater efficiency in the plant. More machines. Power-driven machines that enable one worker to produce as much as five did before, as much as ten did, eighteen, twenty-seven,....

The workers who are made "superfluous" by machinery become an "industrial reserve army" which can slowly starve, or, by its very existence, help to force down the wages of those who are lucky enough to have jobs.

Competition forces each capitalist to look for ways whereby he can produce goods more cheaply than others. The lower his "unit labor cost" the more possible it is to undersell his competitors and still make a profit. With the extension of the use of machinery, the capitalist is able to get the workers to produce more and more goods faster and faster at less and less cost.

But the new and improved machinery which makes this possible costs a lot of money. It means production on a larger scale than before, it means bigger and bigger factories. In other words, it means the accumulation of more and more capital.

There is no choice for the capitalist. The greatest amount of profits goes to the capitalist who uses the most advanced and efficient technical methods. So all capitalists keep striving for improvements. But these improvements require more and more capital. To stay in business at all, to meet the competition of others and preserve what he has, the capitalist must keep constantly expanding his capital.

Not only does he *want* more profits so he can accumulate more capital so he can make more profits – he finds that he is *forced* to do so by the system.

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Women's Pay 3/5 of Men's

by Conn. Dept. of Labor Monthly Bulletin (Nov., Dec., 1971)

Pay discrimination because of sex has been prohibited by law in Connecticut since 1949. It is also prohibited by the Federal Equal Pay Act of 1964 which requires that men and women who perform equal work on jobs requiring equal skill, effort and responsibility, in the same establishment must receive equal pay. The Connecticut Statute, Section 31-75, is similar, "no employer shall discriminate in the amount of compensation paid to any employee solely on the basis of sex. Any difference in pay based on sex shall be determined discrimination. . ."

Income Discrepancy

While the financial effects of wage bias are obvious – reduced purchasing power, lower living standards and an earnings gap which puts women's median income at only 60% of men's – the psychological hardships of discrimination, more difficult to measure, may be equally damaging. The income gap may be due to lack of opportunity in many occupations, but pay discrimination in the same job remains an important factor.

Occupations including kitchen helpers, maids, hospital attendants, laundry workers and bank tellers are among the most *frequent sources of equal pay complaints* according to the Wage and Hour Division.

Where violations of Equal Pay Laws are reported or suspected, State Labor Department Inspectors or Federal Wage and Hour Compliance Officers are authorized to enter the establishment to inspect the premises and records and to interview employees. Violators must pay increases to eliminate the illegal wage difference and provide back wages due the underpaid employees.

The Federal courts have established several principles of significance to employers and women employees under the Equal Pay Act. In one case they rejected the claim of a company that the jobs of men and women have to be *identical* for them to receive the same pay. The court declared that the tasks performed only have to be "substantially equal."

Other significant principles established are:

–Employers may not correct illegal wage differentials by reducing the higher wage rate to match the lower. All employees must receive the higher rate.

–Job classifications or titles do not justify wage differences. Rather, a job's content, actual job requirements, and the worker's performance are the deciding factors.

More than 31 million women in the United States now work and comprise approximately 40% of the total employment. Most women in the labor force work because their families need the money they earn. Some work to raise family standards above the level of poverty; others, to help meet the rising costs of food, education for their children, medical care, and other necessities. Economic need is almost always the reason for working. There are 5.6 million women heads of households who must work to support themselves and their children. For them, above all, equal pay is an urgent matter.

Open Line Why I Hate Paying Taxes

by Mike F. Holodnak

I hate paying taxes because it is all given away to welfare programs that help make life worse instead of better for people. When I speak of welfare programs I don't mean those programs that give aid to the needy. This type of welfare is not only badly needed but is totally inadequate.

The total cost of aid to the needy, according to the latest U.S. government figures for 1969, on the local, state and federal levels, covering 2,200,000 families, amounted to only 4.1 billion dollars.

The welfare, give-away programs that I'm speaking about are the programs that give aid to the greedy. For example, that small group of big-time farmers and agribusinesses who are already very wealthy and who, in this program alone, receive *4 billion dollars annually to take 35 million acres of good soil out of production.* In other words, they are paid fantastic sums of money to grow nothing so that food supplies can be limited to maintain high prices. This, mind you, while we have here in this country alone 30 million hungry people.

This is the main thrust of my argument. We must stop blaming the poor who are on welfare for the woes that have befallen our economy. The real culprits here are the tiny minority of very rich dictators who have complete control of our economy, the mass communications media, and our government , who stupidly masquerade their actions under the label "free world."

The only way these words *free world* will have real meaning is if there was free dissemination of true information from which all the people could make reasonably intelligent decisions that would allow them to have some voice in their own destiny.

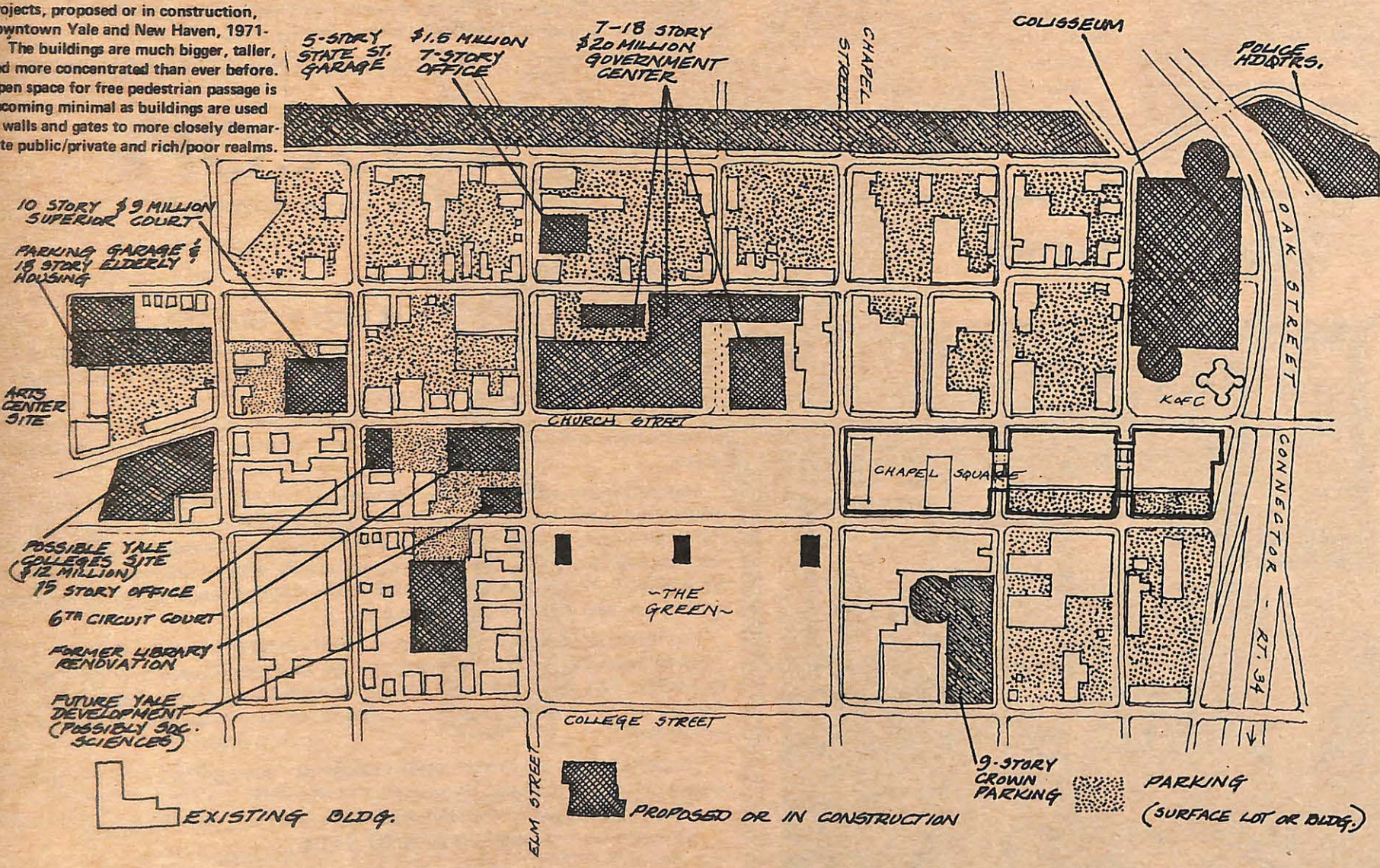
Yet the biggest tax swindle to end all tax swindles, is our cold war policy, which is the main cause of inflation, and which began right after World War II. For instance, from 1946 to 1969, the U.S. government, which is controlled by the rich, gave away or "loaned" to foreign countries the phenomenal sum of $138 billion.

And that's not even counting the staggering billions of dollars that have been and still are being spent on the Vietnam war. All these dollars are tax dollars that all of us who have to work for a living are forced to pay without ever being consulted as to how they are to be spent.

It's bad enough that the American people are being swindled so brazenly, but when it is accompanied with this type of open arrogance, I get the feeling that people like them sincerely believe that the rich have an inherent right to swindle the poor.

URBAN SEEN Building the Closed City

Projects, proposed or in construction, downtown Yale and New Haven, 1971-8. The buildings are much bigger, taller, and more concentrated than ever before. Open space for free pedestrian passage is becoming minimal as buildings are used as walls and gates to more closely demarcate public/private and rich/poor realms.



by Bill Hersey
Modern Times Staff

The distinguishing characteristic of American urban development in the 1970s will be the increased polarization of rich and poor. In the 1960s, New Haven and most cities made at least a show of broad neighborhood renewal. In the growing economic crisis of the coming years, even these gestures will disappear. Downtown business and commercial cores will prosper, but surrounding residential areas will stagnate.

It could have been otherwise. Money could have gone to projects in the neighborhoods, to build homes in the lots that have long stood empty, to make playgrounds or community centers, to convert small lots into gardens or basketball courts. Instead the urban picture being created is a very frightening one of dense, massive, hardedged urban cores surrounded by a widening sea of devastation.

Planning maps and city reports show that the primary development for New Haven in the future will occur in the relatively small downtown area around Church and State Streets. Many large new buildings are planned or in construction. They are monumental in scale, lavishly designed, and with a heavy emphasis on multi-story banking, federal-municipal office complexes, and entertainment facilities.

Existing streets will be bridged and tunnelled by "superblock" construction. High-rise parking structures will be placed like walls and gates. The rich get rich, and the poor get poorer, while the whole system itself tends toward bankruptcy. Nowhere is this situation more apparent than in the American city of the 1970s.

Canal Line Danger to Environment

by Tony Dominski
Modern Times Staff

Just because something is mass transit, it does not mean that it is good for the environment. This fact is emerging from the Canal Line controversy in which the Newhallville Community is attempting to stall a commuter bus line through their neighborhood.

NEWS ANALYSIS

The idea of reducing the numbers of automobiles coming into New Haven by providing increased mass transit is a good one. However, the facility proposed by the city consists of buses that would run at grade level and thus expose pedestrians, especially children, to physical danger. In addition it would form an obstruction in the community and require the closing of a number of streets.

In several other countries in the world there exist efficient, pleasant subways in which electrically driven trains travel in tubes beneath the ground. Such a system in New Haven and vicinity could provide rapid mass transit with minimum environmental disruption. (This system should not be confused with the antiquated, dirty, noisy New York City subway system.)

It might be argued that a tube electrical train is impractical because it costs too much money. The installation cost of a new buslane costs about $3-6 million a mile while a deep tube train costs $6-8 million a mile. The saving in human *life and in environmental disruption would be worth it. And, if we de-emphasize highway construction, we can afford the price of a decent environment for all people in this area - not just for suburbanites.*

If, in the near future, a deep tube train system cannot be built, it would be worthwhile to develop a decent bus service on Whitney and Dixwell Avenues which serve the same region that the canal line would. A decent bus system, coupled with higher parking rates in New Haven, would encourage suburbanites to ride the buses and do their share in maintaining a liveable invironment in the place that they work.

Sirabella Case: Challenge Filed On Jury System

by Andy Melville
Modern Times Staff

Vincent Sirabella, charged with disorderly conduct for his part in Local 35's successful strike against Yale last spring, challenged the jury selection system under which he is to be tried, charging that it results in a jury panel from which working people, women and young people are excluded.

Sirabella's attorney, George Johnson, offered evidence to show that the proportions of workers, women and young people who are chosen by the jury commission are far less than the proportions of those groups in the population. On the basis of this evidence, he argued that, unless the error was corrected, his right to trial by a fair jury would be denied.

Rather than meeting the argument on the merits, the prosecutor objected to the language of the motion, claiming it was not specific enough. The judge sustained the prosecutor's objections, and disallowed Sirabella's evidence.

March Session

The trial is now scheduled for the *March jury session. Prosecution and police officials adamantly refuse to dismiss the charges, hoping to exhaust the Union's funds and spirit. They hope to weaken the Union by dragging out the court proceedings, figuring that the Union will go easier on Yale next contract time.*

Sources close to the union feel that police are out to get the union. Additional cases are pending the outcome of this case.

Canal Line

UNO Plans Legal Action

from Black Coalition Weekly

The United Newhallville Organization (UNO) has promised legal action to block the proposed Canal Line development. The line would be an express bus route from Cheshire cutting through Newhallville to New Haven center.

The proposed legal action followed a walkout by 150 Newhallville residents from the Canal Line hearing at the Hall of Records, Tuesday, February 1.

Margaret Leslie, speaking for the UNO board at a press conference, said, "An injunction will be brought against the Regional Council of Elected Officials of South Central Connecticut and all participating organizations who have planned the Canal Line through the Dixwell-Newhallville community."

Leslie also stated, "the Canal Line will not go through this community," adding, "There comes a time to stop running over people and that time is now."

She made a further point. If the community had been consulted on the Canal Line development proposal before the design and route had been selected, the federal government would have "saved $70,000" in planning funds given to the Regional Council.

Teens Form 'Earth Platform'

by Connecticut Citizen Action Group

Over 350 High School students from all over Connecticut gathered at the University of Hartford, Saturday, February 5, to hammer out an "Earth Platform" on environmental issues. The students, including 70 from the New Haven area, consolidated research gathered over a two month period.

The platform will be distributed widely and will be a rallying point for high school students to organize around during the spring. Some students have already testified at hearings; others will lobby their legislators and public officials for meaningful legislation and enforcement.

The Connecticut Citizen Action Group (CCAG), which was initiated by Ralph Nader, organized the conference and helped oversee the research. Nader himself addressed the group between workshop sessions.

Variety of Topics

Workshops focussed on traditional environmental topics such as air, water, pesticides, and around less traditional ones such as occupational health, urban environment, and transportation.

Although the results of the conference have not yet been made public in any detail, proposals were both in depth and far reaching. For example, the occupational health workshop recommended stronger enforcement of existing laws at the state and Federal level. Specifically, the students recommended upping the number of enforcement officers from 5 to 25.

They also urged that owners and managers be held personally liable for criminal negligence in failing to maintain safe working conditions. Project workers will continue to distribute literature on the new federal law and on known hazards to factory workers in the New Haven area.

Winter Arts Festival

Two local artists present their mixed-media exhibit at the Goffe Street Armory, February 12-13. Leatherwork, weaving, pottery, and etchings were also featured. (M-T photo by Vittorio Comisso.)

PERISCOPE
On The Environment

by Tony Dominski
Modern Times Staff

GO SLOW FOR EMPLOYMENT???

Sol Young, chairman of the Connecticut Strike Force on Full Employment, a former head of a Stamford electronics firm and a Meskill appointee, has stated that efforts to clean up the environment threaten jobs. He criticized the efforts of the state Department of Environmental Protection for "vigorous" action against pollution because he believes that industry will be harmed and will employ fewer people.

Unfortunately, representatives of industry such as Mr. Young have carefully put blinders to the fact that improvements in the environment can help bring about full employment. In New Haven alone there is today over a billion dollars of environmental projects which are long overdue and which could provide thousands of jobs. These projects could result in far reaching improvement in our sewer system, our mass transit system and housing.

The threats of industries which oppose efforts to clean up the environment might be handled by legislation as suggested by Leonard Woodcock of the UAW. He proposes that government give workers the right to sue their employers for damages suffered in plant shutdowns or layoffs resulting from pollution of the environment.

It might also be good to have legislation against "mind pollution" for those who suggest that ecology and employment are incompatible.

UPCOMING CONFERENCES ON OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

February 19, Saturday 1 - 5 P.M. -- As part of the Medical Committee for Human Rights, regional conference the Occupational Health Project of New Haven is presenting an afternoon training and educational session. The training session will include a film of Occupational Health and information on how to implement the new federal Occupational Safety and Health Act.

February 26 -- The Greater New Haven Central Labor Council AFL-CIO is having an all day Conference on Health and Safety. Call 624-6248 for information and reservations.

RR Eatery to Negotiate

Modern Times Staff

The National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) has issued a complaint alleging unfair labor practices against Ancorp National Services, Inc., of New York City, and its lunch counter operation in the New Haven railroad station.

The complaint was issued after NLRB investigation of charges filed by Local 217, Hotel and Restaurant Employees Union, which represents the lunch counter employees.

A trial on the charges before an NLRB trial examiner is tentatively scheduled for February 22 at 10 a.m. in the aldermanic chambers of New Haven City Hall.

The complaint charges that Ancorp, formerly the Union News Company, "did refuse and continue to refuse to bargain collectively and in good faith with the Union ..." The complaint lists five specific failures to bargain with Local 217, which has represented the workers since an NLRB election in August 1969, including failure to negotiate for a contract to replace one that expired January 2, 1972.

According to John Wilhelm, Local 217 Secretary-Treasurer, "This company has consistently taken unfair advantage of the fact that the railroad station lunch counter is a small, marginal operation whose handful of workers have little leverage against such a huge corporation. We are happy that the NLRB has issued this complaint against this arrogant, high-handed company."

Yale New Haven Hospital

Ruling Due on Back Pay

Reprinted from Concerned Hospital Workers Newsletter

Five weeks ago, on Jaunary 13th, six members of the Concerned Hospital Workers met with an Internal Revenue Service representative to get information on how we could win our retroactive pay for the raise promised during the freeze. Our request was referred to the Hartford office of the IRS. We also wrote to the Board of Directors of Yale-New Haven, asking for our retroactive pay. *The pressure was on -- and on January 25, Mr. Womer tentatively agreed to grant the retroactive pay!!*

Without our fight, and the struggle of the organized labor movement throughout the country, retroactive raises would never have become an issue. But because we are fighting for it, we may all receive this money which we need and deserve.

But the fight is not over. Mr. Womer says the Hospital needs "further clarification" before they can grant the back pay. Further clarification of what??? Everybody knows that the Pay Board has already approved retroactive pay. Maybe the Hospital's high priced lawyers are really looking for a loophole to get out of giving the money we were promised. They'd like nothing more than to keep the money and blame it on the Government. We think it's time we got the money -- not more Hospital sweet talk.

Environmentalists Blast Highway Trust

Continued from Page 1

the prized qualities of Connecticut's rural environment.

Houses Not Highways

This reporter, of the Anti-Route 34 Coalition, spoke against the expansion of urban highways such as route 34 and said that the Coalition would continue to press for re-construction of housing on the cleared site of the highway.

Dr. Sharpless of the Connecticut River Ecology Action Coalition stated that automobile transportation made inefficient use of our diminishing petroleum resources. It takes more petroleum to move a passenger in an automobile than in mass transit such as trains and buses.

A planner mentioned that the deep tube electric train was a technologically viable mode of mass transit, proven in many countries, and would provide an efficient, fast means of mass transit in our metropolitan regions. The planner also stated that our present mass transit was not widely used because it was too slow. For example he pointed out that local buses are programmed to carry people at average speeds of under 20 miles per hour.

Raymond Ives of the Connecticut Committees of Correspondence proposed that if the private sector of our economy was unwilling to build an efficient mass transit system then a nationalized system of mass transit should be created.

The D.O.T. "Alternative"

The D.O.T. supported an alternative to the Mettler bill which would put the highway trust funds into a Transportation Fund. However, the anti-highway lobbyists stated that if such a fund were created the D.O.T. would still not change its pro-highway policies. Peter Tripp of the Connecticut Committees of Correspondence also pointed out that a transportation fund would still allow the D.O.T. to encourage plans for a monstrous jetport city in eastern Connecticut as well as an expansion of jetports in other areas of the state.

He summed up the feelings of the citizen's lobby, re-telling the story of the sorcerer's apprentice. The sorcerer's apprentice instructed a broom to haul water but did not know how to stop it before a flood was created. Just so the Highway Trust Fund and the state D.O.T. is out of control and must be stopped before they destroy our environment.

The Connecticut Highway Coalition which was organized this winter in a series of Hartford meetings called by Dennis Chapman of CCAG will continue to function in the highway fights to come, involving Routes 34, 44, 66, 291, 84 and any others the D.O.T. dreams up.

Bread & Roses

Modern Times Graphics Staff

This poem was written by James Oppenheim upon seeing young mill girls picketing with a banner proclaiming "We want bread and roses too."

As we come marching, marching in
the beauty of the day,
A million darkened kitchens, a
thousand mill lofts gray,
Are touched with all the radiance
that a sudden sun discloses,
For the people hear us singing:
"Bread and roses! Bread and roses!"

As we come marching, marching, we
battle too for men,
For they are women's children, and
we mother them again.
Our lives shall not be sweated from
birth until life closes;
Hearts starve as well as bodies; give
us bread, but give us roses!

As we come marching, marching,
unnumbered women dead
Go crying through our singing their
ancient cry for bread.
Small art and love and beauty their
drudging spirits knew.
Yes, it is bread we fight for--but we
fight for roses, too!

As we come marching, marching, we
bring the greater days.
The rising of the women means the
rising of the race.
No more the drudge and idler--ten
that toil where one reposes,
But a sharing of life's glories: Bread
and roses! Bread and roses!

Elizabeth Gurley Flynn

Sixty years ago this January, February and March, one of America's most historic strikes took place among 40,000 textile workers in Lawrence, Mass. An important participant and one of the first women to lead a mass strike was Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, a 21 year old International Workers of the World (IWW) organizer. She encouraged the women workers, who along with children made up over half the mill workers, to break with tradition and to take a place on the picket line.

Arturo Giovantti and Joseph Ettor were also IWW organizers. Ettor, fluent in Yiddish Italian, English, Polish and Hungarian, helped establish communication among the 30 nationalities speaking over 45 languages who were involved in the strike. A Strike Committee was set up with representatives of every nationality, from every mill and every department. Picket lines of thousands circled the mills daily. They were met with the brutal strike-breaking attempts of the mill owners and their thugs (police, state troopers and militiamen.)

The nation became outraged by reports from Lawrence of merciless beatings of striking men, women and children, of starvation, of sickness, and murder. A Congressional Investigation ensued and soon after the textile manufacturers gave in.

The strikers were victorious -- together with the IWW they had challenged the concept of private ownership. By demanding not only higher wages but also by talking about workers having control of the wage system. They raised their standard of living, improved their working conditions and proved that unskilled and semi-skilled workers, united, have the power to enact social change.

Review Film Sadism & Self Respect

by Jim Walsh

HAMLET at the Long Wharf Theatre, directed by Arvin Brown.

STRAW DOGS directed by Sam Peckinpah. Starring Dustin Hoffman.

Hamlet is a long, difficult and demanding play to watch. It is also well worth the effort. The key to the play's success is a refreshing spirit of co-operation among the members of the company. The actors in a long and difficult drama often find themselves playing to their own lines; in effect, appearing as so many speech-makers waiting for their turn at the dais. LWT's (Long Wharf Theatre's) *Hamlet* is an example of players committed to working together to present Shakespeare's art through fine acting, rather than using Shakespeare as a vehicle to their own individual ends.

It is impossible to do justice to the content of the play in a few words. The themes of revenge, honor, love, and madness are intricate and subtle, thus lending themselves to a variety of interpretations. However, the question of the meaning of death is central to the play and is the theme around which all other themes revolve. Hamlet's musings on the death of his father, the death of Yorick and his own urge to suicide point to life as being profoundly meaningless and absurd.

STRAW DOGS

But tell me friends, doesn't all this Hamlet stuff strike you as just a bit artificial, over intellectual and naive? Let me now take you to the starkly real. For while squares were watching *Hamlet*, the people, the real people, were into Straw *Dogs* at Cinema I.

Straw Dogs has the virtue of containing no crap. It is real. Sex and violence, gore, rape, graphic shots of blood and guts, all in wide angle, 35 mm, smello-tasto-feelo- vision, technicolor, super-duper, quadro-stereophonic sound. And the audience! Let me tell you that there were no sighs of aesthetic appreciation at a sublime and beautiful soliloquy on the meaninglessness of existence. Hell no! Cheers, my friends; sock-it-to-'em, give-'em-hell cheers as body after bloody body fell to its ingenious and unnatural end.

But wait. I haven't yet told you the plot. It's not very difficult to follow, complexity not being a forte of Sam Peckinpah. Take one mild-mannered American scholar. He has gone to a farm with his wife searching for peace and quiet in which to seek out the hidden mathemetical nature of the universe. He is diminutive, bespectacled, somewhat other worldly in a modish sort of way. His wife is exceedingly attractive, Bridget Bardotish, braless and mini-skirted, with the emotional maturity of a twelve year old. In any event, she has a subtle attention-getting device (beyond her lack of bra and at times almost lack of skirt.) That is, she takes off her clothes in front of an open window for the benefit of a group of lower-class odd-job men who are repairing the farm she and her husband are staying in.

This habit of hers is quite disturbing to her audience, including those in the theater. The men hatch a plan to get her husband off in the moors someplace and two of them rape her. This is shown quite graphically. Clothing being torn, breasts exposed, her defenseless body lying beneath a big, hard, brute; the underpants are ripped off and, low and behold, she changes her mind. If I'm going to be *forced, I may as well enjoy it. This remarkable change of heart, if you will, is seemingly brought to a halt when rapist No. 2 enters the picture.*

Have you got all that now? Sensitive, dumb husband off in the woods, surly brutes enjoying his wife's body, and she somewhat enjoying them. There is a subplot here which involves a moron and a sexually precocious thirteen year-old but it seems merely a handy way of getting us to the final, bloody scenes of the picture. The moron inadvertently kills the little sex kitten, is hit by the mathematician's car, and ends up out at the farm house. Her father and our roustabouts learn of his presence there and proceed to storm *it in the tradition of all the old Frankenstein movies, outraged peasants with torches, etc.*

HAMLET FORCES his murderous step-father Claudius to drink the poisoned potion prepared for the young prince in William Shakespeare's "Hamlet." (M-T photo by William Smith)

This situation strains the patience of our mild-mannered slob and he, one by one, dusts off those who are assaulting his home. His wife is, to say the least, equivocal about this bloody operation, but she more or less assists him in the slaughter.

Well, that's it. No bullshit, no soliloquies, no pondering over the transcendent meaning of existence. Just a great motion picture. The audience enjoyed it. They cheered our heroes on. Several dead, a few maimed, a couple raped, and a smile on Dustin Hoffman's weary face.

Respect for Audience

How does one compare *Hamlet* and *Straw Dogs*? I think it comes down to one issue; respect. One feels that Shakespeare respected his audience (and himself) enough to create something to look at and hold onto in a "weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable" world. Peckinpah is disdainful and treats his audience in the same gratuitous way that he treats his characters. There are more lives lost in *Hamlet* than in *Straw Dogs*, yet because Shakespeare asks you to consider and think about this tragedy, you leave the theater more enhanced as a human being because of it. Sam Peckinpah gives you technicolor breasts and lots of blood, but not much more. He invites you to become the dog he believes you are.

Review The Tramp Returns

by Shoshana Hersey

Modern Times Staff

CITY LIGHTS

Written and directed by Charlie Chaplin

"City Lights," the last of a series of Chaplin movies at the Lincoln, is a very funny and very poignant episode in the life of Charlie Chaplin's Tramp. This is the only one of Chaplin's films that I've seen, but from what I gather it is a typical story of the Tramp as he bumps up against all manner of people and all levels of society.

The Tramp is the unconscious victim whose predicaments exquisitely mock the pomp and circumstance of society. The first scene, which introduces you to the sad-sack level of comedy, is the dedication of a monument. After the ceremonious orations, the statue is unveiled and there sleeping in its arms is the Tramp.

The officials are irate and motion furiously for him to come down. He tries but, alas, he gets caught by the seat of his pants on the sword of another figure. He tries to extricate himself,

but just then come the sounds of the national anthem and he attempts to remain reverent while all the time trying to free himself from the unholy grip of the statue. The crowd at the presentation ceremony jeers and laughs as Chaplin makes his exit, tipping his hat all the while.

Tramp Finds Love

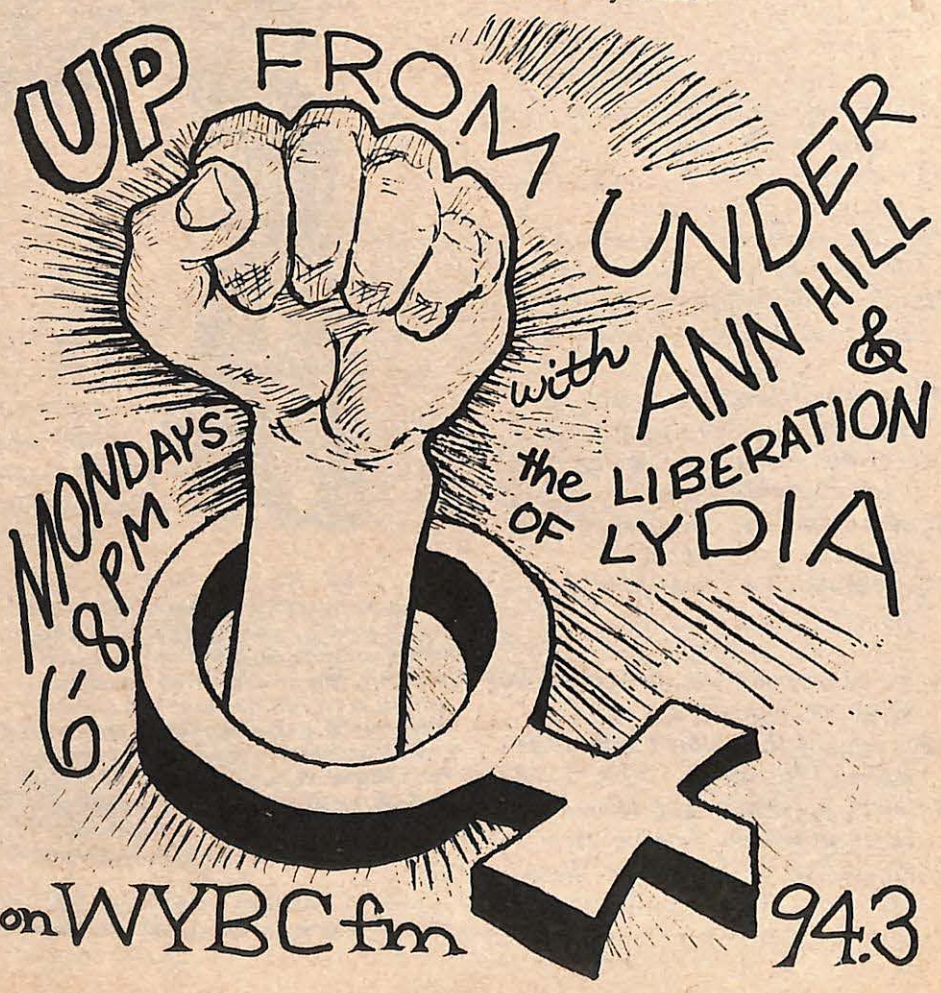
But there is not only laughter with our Tramp. There is sad romance as well, sad because he is the most unlikely of romantic figures. He meets up with a beautiful blind girl who sells him a flower and captures his heart. He becomes her benefactor (even tries his hand at getting a job and has a very short-lived career dancing his way through his roles as garbageman and boxer).

Meanwhile, he meets a rich man whom he saves from a drunken suicide. Charlie is taken home, introduced to a wining and dining society which he practically demolishes, and even given a Rolls Royce. Unhappily the rich man forgets Charlie the moment he is sober.

The Tramp falls into hard times. He is accused of robbery and imprisoned. Out of jail, more tattered and forlorn than before, he sees the girl again, now in her own flower shop. But now she can see him too. And as he holds a flower that she has given him in his hand and smiles shyly at her, she looks at him with dawning recognition and horror and says "You?"

It is the constant undercurrent of sadness through which gives the laughter its very special quality. The Tramp is a misfit, and as such he cannot settle into or become accepted by any segment of society. By means of his own mishaps and disasters, Charlie points up society's foibles, its poverty and, lovingly, its human poignancy.

It is particularly appropriate that this series is being shown now in several American cities, since Chaplin is due back in this country for the first time in 20 years to receive an Oscar, after having been ostracized for "Communism and immorality." If it ever comes back to New Haven, it really should not be missed.



Food Prices Skyrocket

Continued from page 1

While the information presented here is still only partially complete, it is possible to indicate the relative ranks of different stores. Among those with the lowest prices were Hills-Korvette in Milford, A-Mart stores in East Haven and West Haven, Shop Rite in Hamden, and Stop & Shop in Branford.

Highest prices were found at A & P stores in West Haven and Hamden, Atlantic in West Haven, and Consumer's COOP in New Haven and Hamden. The difference in prices of the items covered between the highest and lowest priced stores was about 15% . The incomplete results so far also suggest that a shopper could save 10% on the cost of food at the lowest cost store by going from store to store selecting the cheapest price.

The completed survey will indicate differences between stores within a given chain, and differences between prices in New Haven and its suburbs. It will also detail the average price rank of the different stores.

In the two store surveys made on December 2 and January 20, prices rose over one per cent giving a projected annual increase of more than seven per cent. Final results will be based on a third survey taken on February 3.

Most of the persons who took part in the survey in this area where housewives; high school and college students, teachers, and members of the Connecticut Consumers Association. Similar food price surveys are now being conducted throughout the nation in Hartford, Columbus (Ohio), Minneapolis, Chicago, St. Louis, and Washington D.C.

As indicated above, CCAG will be checking food prices as a continuing project. Interested individuals or groups which would like to take part should contact the CCAG office, 787 - 7186.

Rides to Prisons Made Available

Citizens for Better Correctional Institutions (CBCI) today announced a program to provide transportation for families who wish to visit relatives in prison. The group will take families to prisons at Somers, Niantic,Cheshire,and the New Haven jail on Whalley Avenue. The New Haven Red Cross, Yale University's Battell Chapel, and the Yale Religious Ministries are working with CBCI on the project. A spokesman for CBCI said that the program is already under way. Families in need of transportation should contact the Rev. James H. Davis, pastor of First United Methodist Church, at 624-2521.

CBCI also announced the chairmen and women of its various task forces who were named last Monday evening. The task forces and their leaders are:

Mental and Medical Health (Miss Carol Baer, Mr. Art Mazer);

Rights of Inmates, Service to Families (Mrs. Irmgard Wessel);

Education (Mr. Barry Fritz, Mrs. Linda Frazzini, Sister Thoma Swanson);

Legislation and Governmental Affairs (Mr. David Neuroth); and

Courts, Bail, Pre-Trial, Parole/Probation (Mrs. Marnie Henretig, Miss Billy Hucul).

The spokesman for CBCI said that each group would work separately, but report on its work and findings to CBCI and the public. "Several task forces will soon announce their own projects and programs," he added. Interested persons should contact a task force leader or the Rev. Davis.

War Foes Meet

NHPAC Reveals Plans

by Leslie Craine
New Haven PAC

On Wednesday night, Febraury 2, 40 New Haveners attended a public meeting of the New Haven Peace Action Coalition (NHPAC) at Trinity Church Parish House. The program launched the Coalitions's educational campaign to expose the myth that the war in Indo-China is winding down and to mobilize opposition to the war.

First on the agenda for the evening was a slide show, prepared by the National Association for Research on the Military Industrial Complex, which depicted methods of electronic warfare employed in Southeast Asia. Following the slides, speakers from several organizations involved in anti-war activities discussed plans for the near future.

Cliff Bush, Black Student Union president at the University of New Haven, said that his group plans to hold a discussion on the war and its relation to the American black community. Andy Mellor of Vietnam Veterans Against the War (VVAW) disclosed plant to speak to congregations of churches in the community about the war.

Barry Weissglass of Yale Student Mobilization Committee (SMC) urged all students to attend the national student anti-war convention in New York City, February 25 to 27. Busses to the convention will be available for students in the New Haven area. For information and tickets contact the Yale SMC in room 7, Dwight Hall (on High Street near Chapel) or call 436-1480, ext. 7 after 2 p.m.

NHPAC will continue in the next two months to conduct its educational campaign. Persons or organization interested in a program of speakers, written or visual material against the war, should call the Coalition at 777-4265 Monday through Friday afternoons. The next NHPAC meeting is Wednesday, Feb. 23 at 8 p.m. in Trinity Church Parish house, 53 Wall Street. All are invited.

Confab on Job Safety Here

The Greater New Haven Central Labor Council is sponsoring a one-day conference for area local unions on the subject of job safety and health for workers and their rights under the new federal Occupational Safety and Health Act. All workers from plants in the local area are invited to attend.

The Conference will be held on Saturday, February 26 in Strathcona Hall at Yale University beginning at 9:30 a.m.

Last year alone in the U.S. at least 15,000 workers were killed on the job and 2.2 million were disabled in one way or another in the course of their employment. Workers are victims of chemicals, dust, hazardous machinery, heat, noise and other stresses which shorten their lives. It is our intention to take swift action towards seeking remedies of these unfavorable conditions under the new Occupational Safety and Health Act.

The February 26 Conference will direct its attention to hazardous conditions now existing in area plants and jobs.

Representatives of the National AFL-CIO and the U.S. Department of Labor will be present to explain the new legislation and what workers must do to implement it. A noted pathologist in the area of occupational health will describe the various diseases which affect workers in some job situations.

There will also be workshop sessions for all participants. Registrations for the Conference are still available.

Where To Buy Modern Times

Hill: Beirne's, Howard-Columbus; Wil-Mor's, Congress-Hallock; Len-Mac Cleaners, Howard-Sylvan; Martinez Grocery, Washington-West.

Fair Haven: Wil-Mor's, Grand-James; Marie's, Grand-Lloyd; Fair Haven Parents Ministry, Grand-James, Sal's Sandwich Shop, 188 Grand; Lenny's Market, St. Johns-Chestnut; Pequot Drug, Grand-East Pearl.

Downtown: Red's Newstand, Elm-State; News Depot, Orange-George; Band Box, Chapel near College; Whitlock's, Broadway; Angela Davis Bookstore, Broadway.

Hamden: Cherry Hill Pharmacy, 1830 Dixwell; Soybel Pharmacy, Dixwell-Wooding.

West Haven: Silver's, Campbell-Main; Liggett's, Campbell-Center; Rivoli Luncheonette, Campbell-Center.

Newhallville: Davis-Waller, Goodrich-Newhall; Visel's Drugs, Dixwell-Bassett; Bob's Market, Dixwell-Division.

State-Orange: Standard Food Market, 852 State; Orange-Grove Pharmacy; Whitney Pharmacy, near Edwards; Orange Market. , 500 Orange.

Dixwell: Davis-Waller, Dixwell Plaza; Lake Variety, Dixwell-Lake Place; Windsor Drugs, Winchester-Webster; FH Discount, 138 Goffe St.

Westville: Beaver Hill Pharmacy, Fitch-Blake; Westville Pharmacy, Fountain-Central; Coyne Stationery, Amity Center; Lurie's Pharmacy, Whalley-Dayton.

Dwight: Nu-Way Market, Howe-Chapel; Volpe's Pharmacy, Chapel-Beers; Group W, Dwight-Edgewood; Esquire Restaurant, Chapel-Orchard.

Mid-town: Book World, Chapel-York; Superbooks, Chapel-York; Downstairs Gallery, York near Chapel; C & I Grocery, Norton-George; Audio Showcase, Whalley-Winthrop; LaBella's Luncheonette, 433 Chapel; Our Food Store, Whalley-Winthrop; Gary's New York Deli, 1207 Chapel; Ray's Coffee Shop, York-Chapel; Omnibus, Park near Crown.

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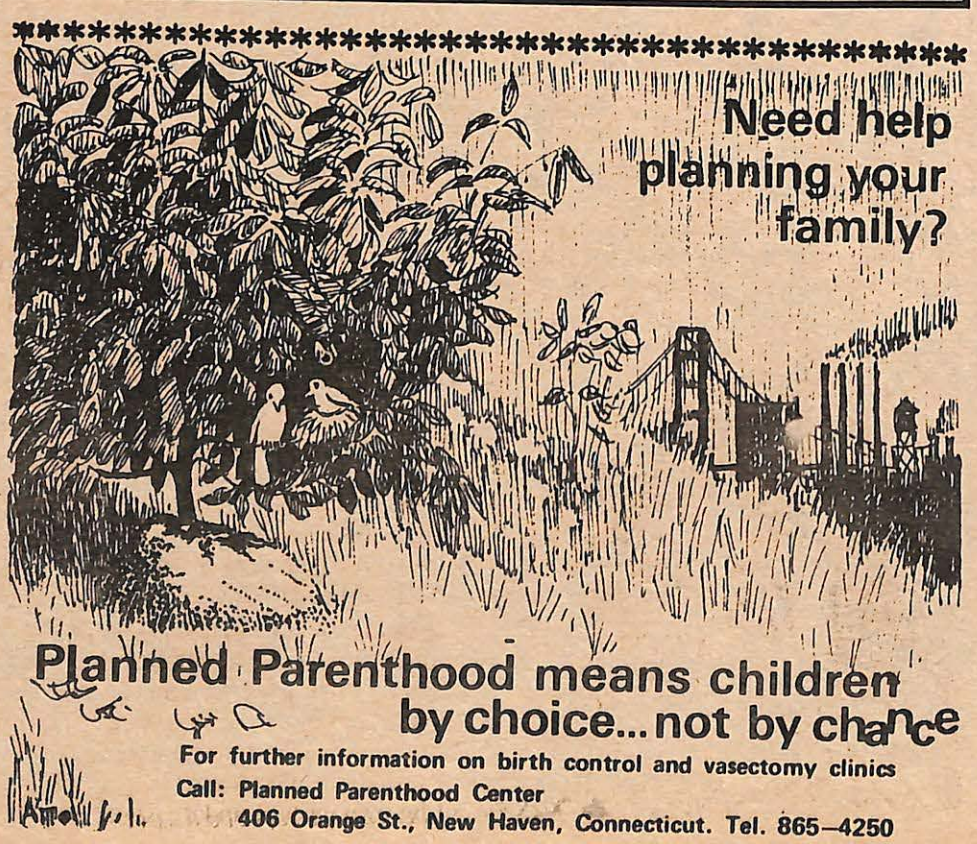

For further information on birth control and vasectomy clinics
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On The Job

Hospital Work No Picnic

Workers in the Building Services and Housekeeping Departments at Yale-New Haven Hospital have a big job to do. They keep the buildings clean, vacuum the rugs in the lobby, and clean the patients' rooms in the wards. These large steam irons in the hospital will not be needed any more since laundry operations are being moved to Milford. Many jobs will be lost in the move. (M-T photo by R.Milici.)

by A Transportation Aide

This new feature will appear regularly in **Modern Times**. *We ask for articles that talk about the kinds of jobs our readers have and about how workers struggle against profit-minded employers to make their jobs better, more dignified, and more useful for the whole community. We welcome the story you have to tell. Call us or send it in to* **Modern Times**, *441 Chapel St. New Haven, Conn. 06510 (562-2510).*

For the past three years, I have worked as a transportation aide at Yale-New Haven Hospital. My duties have included: transporting patients by wheelchair or stretcher; delivering mail, food, linen, supplies or equipment to and from floors; weighing patients on a bedscale; lifting them in and out of bed; driving a towmotor, giving patients preps and enemas, and sorting and disposing of used bottles and supplies.

A lot of times the work is hard--either hard to take or just plain hard work. But most of us are willing to work hard, especially where it involves the patients. Sometimes it becomes frustrating. It seems impossible to both care for each patient properly and also do all the work we're expected to do. As we find the staff shorter and shorter, and see the patients pay more and more, we begin to wonder what's more important to the hospital--the patients or the money?

Some Hospital Workers talk about the Union during their coffee breaks and lunch breaks in the canteens at YNHH. The struggle for Union recognition still goes on. (MT photo by Ray Milici)

Some supervisors understand the problems of working around patients--others are clockwatchers who don't want to hear excuses. There is a joke about a certain supervisor--"He thinks he's at a factory." The question of how fast to work never gets answered for good and sometimes leads to arguments with the boss.

So Little Concern

Then you begin to wonder how a public service institution like a hospital can have so little concern for its workers. Department heads and administrators seem to be holding on to every penny as if it were theirs. They very rarely pay anyone for overtime work, and sometimes even make a fuss about paying sick time. Those who get hurt on the job may find themselves without sick pay, without compensation, and--in a few cases--without a job.

In addition, I should mention a problem of all non-professionals. We are often regarded as stupid or inferior by some nurses, doctors, and other professionals. *For example, we are occasionally called "boy" or "girl", even by people younger than we are; or ignored by a professional who is supposed to help us; or automatically blamed for a mistake, because that's easier than finding out who was responsible.*

These problems with supervisors and professionals often make people give up trying to do their jobs well--or at all.

Helping Each Other

How do the rest of us manage to stay? The simplest kind of protection is cooperation. Some aides are very keenly aware of how close others are to quitting or getting fired, and there is a lot of advice on how to keep the job. One of my friends told me to stop arguing with supervisors, because it would lose me support of other workers when the hospital might try to fire me. I realized he was right.

There is also a lot of cooperation in doing the work. Though it may be against the rules, aides often help each other out by exchanging work or by acting as a team. An aide and I slowed down an impossible work load by sometimes taking credit for each other's equipment deliveries. This way we could make sure we each got credit for about the same amount of work, and neither of us could be used against the other.

But somehow, all these little ways of sticking together fall short of the mark. It's still up to the supervisor to make you do what he wants, as fast as he wants it done, or to send you home. To a number of us, it became clear that to keep our jobs with reasonable working conditions and dignity, we had no choice but to organize a union.

One little example will show how scared the supervisors are of this idea: during the Local 35 strike at Yale, a part of my job was to deliver mail to the Yale Medical School. Being unorganized, of course, we had no legal right to refuse to cross the picket line. But a number of us decided anyway to "ask not to be asked" to deliver the mail as our way of helping the Yale workers win the strike. Rather than force the issue, the supervisors avoided it, by asking someone else to deliver the mail.

In trying to unionize the Hospital, of course, we have a much bigger job on our hands. Of the 3,000 employees, at least *half are eligible for union membership. Standing ready to do the job of unionizing* over 1,000 employees is a small but very dedicated organizing committee, of which I am proud to be a member. We are all different on this committee--old and young, black and white, men and women--and from many different departments and jobs.

For two years we have fought in a fight that is sometimes hopeless, sometimes hopeful, and most important, still going on. What keeps us together now is that our cause is right, that we've kept together this long, and that we know one day we'll win.

We have some accomplishments. Although the bosses have tried to harass us, not a single one of us has lost a job. One time we took the Hospital before the State Labor Board and won some back pay for a member of our group who had been suspended. We scared the Hospital enough to make them try to stop the union by granting a little raise every year.

In other ways, I think we've made the Hospital treat the workers a little bit better. For the administration knows that the people have an alternative if they get angry enough. So they figure they'd best give in a little. For ourselves, we have also learned a lot together, gone through a lot together, and built the strongest possible kind of solidarity.

In the most difficult times, I think some of the older workers in our group do the most to keep us going. A member who has been involved in several other organizing drives once gave some of us the following advice: "I can see you're getting discouraged," he said. "I know how you feel. Don't even think about the union for a while. We should all go out and get drunk. Or else give a big party. Let's get to know each other better. But above all, DON'T QUIT THE JOB. As long as there are bosses and workers, the boss will sooner or later show himself--and if we're still here, the people will be ready for us." That is still my hope.

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